

Breacker inspires hopes of survival

By Timothy Collings

Luton 2 Arsenal 0 ^{89/90}

TIM BREACKER celebrated his 200th League appearance for Luton on Saturday with a performance which epitomised the struggling club's never-say-die spirit and helped keep alive their hopes of another season in the First Division.

A regular in the first team for six of Luton's eight years among the elite, the right-back was not only their outstanding performer, but also created the second goal.

Arsenal, held at home by Liverpool the previous Wednesday night, played as if they had lost interest in the season, as well as the championship, and Breacker, with several timely interceptions and a series of surging runs, inspired a victory which leaves Sheffield Wednesday trapped in the danger zone.

The only disappointment on a day of unlikely encouragement for Luton came when captain Danny Wilson, who had led by example with an intelligent and energetic display, was carried off 10 minutes from time with a damaged calf muscle.

Luton had used both substitutes and were forced to survive the last 10 minutes with only 10 men, a task they completed comfortably thanks to the coolness of Beaumont and an outstanding save by Chamberlain from Smith.

Luton manager Jim Ryan was pleasantly surprised at the tactics adopted by Arsenal who fielded three central defenders and three centre-forwards on a plastic pitch which places the emphasis on nimble, skilful midfield play.

With none of Adams, Bould and O'Leary in complete command, Luton were able to exploit the spaces left in midfield and take the lead when, from a centre by Preece, Dowie punished their hesitation in defence by stealing the ball from Winterburn and steering it past Lukic.

The second goal came on the hour when Breacker combined with Wilson and Rees to set up Black for a tap-in.

Luton now hope that victories in their final two fixtures, at home to Crystal Palace and away to Derby, combined with Sheffield Wednesday's continuing demise, will be their means to another unlikely escape on the last day of the season.